



Sen. Joe Zarelli  
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#### **Committee Assignments**

- Ways & Means, Ranking Republican
- International Trade & Economic Development
- Rules

#### **Town Halls**

**Saturday, March 19<sup>th</sup>.**

10:00 – 11:30 am  
Woodland Council  
Chambers  
230 Davidson Ave.  
Woodland

1:00 – 2:30 pm  
Hockinson High School  
Library  
16819 NE 159<sup>th</sup> Street  
Brush Prairie

#### **For those attending the district day!!!**

If you want to tour the Governor's Mansion, the State Patrol needs to know your name in advance. And be prepared to show picture ID. Please contact our office by March 21<sup>st</sup>.

# Sen. Joe Zarelli's

## UPDATE FROM OLYMPIA

### 3/18/05

Dear Friends,

This past week saw several long days of debate on the Senate Floor that went well into the night. When a bill passes a Senate committee, the next major obstacle is getting through the Rules Committee and onto the Senate Floor for discussion and voting by all 49 members of the Senate.

As I sat at my desk on the Senate Floor through hours and hours of deliberations, I began to think about all the programs and ideas being proposed by Senate Democrats that end up spending more taxpayer dollars. And while some of these programs sound good, in light of the state's \$2.2 billion shortfall they fall short of the straight-face test.

Here is a quick rundown of our budget situation followed by a list of things we've seen introduced this session:

#### **Big ticket items within the \$2.2 billion hole**

- Increased health insurance costs for state employees – \$371 million;
- Raises for teachers – \$140 million;
- Raises for state workers – \$200 million;

#### **Spending proposals beyond the \$2.2 billion hole**

- Simple majority for school bonds – \$145 million;
- Eliminating six-month income verification for Medicaid recipients – \$31 million;
- New drinking water regulations in schools – \$16 - \$239 million;
- New environmental panel – \$3.4 million;
- New tax for paid leave – \$1.4 - \$3.9 million;
- New water mandate: Add water to Columbia River – \$1.1 million;
- Governor's water court – \$4.2 million;
- New L&I electronic reporting – \$1.4 million;
- Expanding tuition waivers for students – \$17.27 million;
- Higher salaries for community college faculty – \$7.2 million;
- Start-up costs for state-funded medical liability insurance fund – \$10 million.

Again, some of these ideas have merit, but our message to Senate Democrat Leaders has been: When you find yourself in a \$2.2 billion budget hole, stop digging! Washington families are being buried under a litany of "good ideas." I will continue to work for a sensible, balanced budget without raising taxes.

Sincerely,

#### **District Day – You are invited!**

The 18<sup>th</sup> Legislative District Day will be held on Wednesday, March 23. The day will include a tour of the newly-refurbished Legislative Building, lunch (**bring your own brown-bag lunch**) with myself, Rep. Orcutt and Rep. Curtis, a tour of the Governor's Mansion and a tour of the Temple of Justice. We will start the day at 10:00 a.m. in the State Reception Room located in the Legislative Building. Please contact my office if you plan on attending!